



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS Newsletter

MEMPHIS, TN

JULY/AUGUST 2009

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

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The Memphis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends conducts meetings on the first Thursday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at St. Louis Church located at 203 S. White Station at Shady Grove.

Be sure to bring a picture of your child to the meeting. We have a table set up for the placement of pictures of our children. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.



TCF Meeting for July – “How grief affects family relationships; we grieve differently” We will discuss how this can cause conflict in the family and what we can do about it.

Refreshments will be provided by Tony & Sandy Williams

TCF Meeting for August – “I wish someone would...” What you need and how to ask for help.

Refreshments will be provided by Laurie Williams & Dianne Rhea

The Wisdom of God's Plan

It's sometimes very difficult for us to understand the wisdom and the love behind the things God has planned. But we wouldn't know of pleasure if we'd never tasted pain; we wouldn't love the sunrise if we hadn't felt the night; and we wouldn't know our weakness if we hadn't sensed God's might. We couldn't have the springtime or the yellow daffodils if we hadn't first experienced the winter's frosty chill. And though the brilliant sunshine is something God had made; He knew too much could parch our souls; so He created shade. So God's given us a balance, enough joys to keep us glad, enough tears to keep us humble, enough good to balance bad; and if you'll trust in Him, you'll see though yesterday's brought sorrow, the clouds will part and dawn will bring a happier tomorrow.

I Wish I Could Wish Forever

I wish I could turn back the clock; just make time altogether stop. I wish that you were here again. I wish to see you smile; I wish to hold you close; I wish you were not dead. I wish for all that was, back then. I wish that you could see the rainbow. I wish that you could watch the children grow. I wish you could come back to us; I wish that grief would go. Some may say I'm just wishing my life away which is not clever. But if wishing makes you at all alive, then I wish I could wish forever.

Jane Wallace, TCF Norman, OK

Perhaps the hardest losses are the most intangible, dreams, hopes and fantasies. What is intangible cannot be buried. None gives a funeral for the loss of hope. Few letters of condolence come when we lose a dream. That which was left unfulfilled leaves us alone; to grapple with the question of why, over and over.

Stephanie Ericsson, Companion Though the Darkness

When Tomorrow Starts Without Me

When tomorrow starts without me, and I'm not there to see if the sun should rise and find your eyes all filled with tears for me. I wish so much you wouldn't cry the way you did today while thinking of the many things we did not get to say. I know how much you love me, as much as I love you and each time that you think of me I know you'll miss me too. But when tomorrow starts without me, please try to understand an Angel came and called my name and took me by the hand. He said my place was ready in heaven far above and that I'd have to leave behind me all those ones I dearly love. But as I turned to walk away, a tear fell from my eye for all my life I'd always thought I didn't want to die. I had so much to live for, so much left yet to do. It seemed almost impossible, that I was leaving you. I thought of all the yesterdays, the good ones and the bad I thought of all the love we shared and all the fun we had. If I could relive yesterday, just even for a while I'd say good-bye and kiss you, and maybe see you smile But then I fully realize, that this could never be, for the emptiness and memories would take the place of me. And when I thought of worldly things that I might miss come tomorrow, I thought of you and when I did my heart was filled with sorrow. But when I walked through Heaven's Gate, I felt so much at home; God looked down and smiled at me from His great golden throne. He said, “This is Eternity and all I've promised you; today your life on earth has passed and I promise no tomorrow but today will always last and since each day is the same, there's no longing for the past. You've been so faithful, so trusting and so true, though there were times you did some things you knew you shouldn't do. But you have been forgiven for all your sins and now at last you're free so won't you come and take my hand and share your life with me. So when tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart; for every time you think of me I'm right there in your heart.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 2009 - Balloon Release & Pot Luck • Dec. 2009 - TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Parents

The Memphis TCF Chapter has a website with information about TCF and what is happening in the Memphis Chapter. We also have a page where we have a picture slideshow of our children. We are preparing a section for individual child pages which can feature images of the children and/or their favorite possessions, themes, personal comments and stories about our children. If you would like to have your child's picture added to our website you will need to sign a release form which is required by our Webmaster and the National Chapter. Bring the picture and the written verbiage to our next meeting or send it by email to dahrius1@yahoo.com. The written information on your child needs to be prepared in any text editing program and saved on a disk (to bring to the meeting or to send to the address below) or e-mailed as an attachment. You can view our website at www.tcfmemphis.org; click on "Our Children." On that page there is a link to obtain the required release form. Bring the form to a meeting or send to Clint Norwood, 3402 Douglass, Memphis TN, 38111.

Birthday Table

Each month we provide a Birthday Table for the parents whose children would be celebrating a birthday. We invite you to bring pictures, scrapbooks and other mementos that belonged to your child to share with your Compassionate Friends.

TCF Library

We have an extensive TCF Library that is a valuable resource for our Chapter and new parents. We ask that you check the books or tapes out by completing the check-out card in the front of the book/tape and return what you have checked out in a few months. If you have any books you would like to donate to our Library, contact Pri Morden at 274-9338.

Grief Materials

The Compassionate Friends has joined with Centering Corporation to provide resources at conferences and to our chapters. Centering Corporation is North America's oldest and largest bereavement resource company and carries more than 400 resources for grieving families and caregivers. If you would like to receive a catalog, contact Centering Corporation at PO Box 4600, Omaha, NE 68104; phone 402-553-1200 or visit their Web site at www.centering.org.

TCF Wristbands

Our chapter has Compassionate Friends wristbands with "Forever In My Heart" imprinted and framed by two butterflies available for \$1.00. If you would like to order TCF wristbands, call Gwen Elrod at 901-388-3298 or send your request to gwenelrod@hotmail.com.

Religion – A Continuing Theme

The principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class or ethnic group. TCF promotes no specific religion or philosophical ideology. Despite our non-denominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinion and beliefs expressed in the articles and poetry are those of the author.



Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child and know that sometimes when you are having a particularly bad day you might need to talk. We understand and would like to listen. Please feel free to contact any of us listed below.

Accidental Death – Shelia Foust 901-496-9649 or 662-895-1424

Sue Ann Duffy 901-848-4134

Illness/Cancer – Gwen Elrod 901-388-3298

Chronic Illness – Jack & Peggy U'Ren 901-388-6759

Infant/Baby – Jennifer Brown 901-483-0605

Suicide – Oliver & Claudia Ellison 901-466-0973



2009 TCF National Conference

"Community of Compassion – Rainbows of Love" will be the theme of the 32nd National Conference to be held August 7th, 8th and 9th 2009, at the Double Tree-Lloyd Center Hotel in Portland, Oregon. The keynote speakers for this year's conference are Candy Lightner, founder of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD), Darcie Sims, who uses a unique form of humor as a type of grief therapy, Reg and Maggie Green who's son was killed at the hand of Highway bandits in Italy and Michele Longo Eder, author of *Salt in our Blood-The Memoir of a Fisherman's Wife*. For the most up to date information, visit TCF 2009 National Conference at compassionatefriends.org.

If you listen carefully during the long hours of a dark and lonely night, you may hear only silence. Angels do their work quietly, and when they are finished, they hurry away on tiptoes.

Principles of The Compassionate Friends

TCF offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents

- We have learned through our own experiences that the death of a child, brother, sister, or grandchild has caused a pain that is best understood by others who have also experienced such a loss
- We focus on supporting parents, siblings, and grandparents in their journeys through grief
- We define the terms “parent,” “grandparent,” “brother,” and “sister” broadly, welcoming the bereaved from all family units

TCF believes that bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents can help each other toward a positive resolution of grief

- We understand that each bereaved person will find a unique path through grief
- We know that expressing our thoughts and feelings is integral to the healing process, and we focus our help to the bereaved by providing a safe, supportive environment for such expression
- We are a self-help group and thus do not offer professional psychotherapy or counseling
- We respect the professional community and welcome its support; we do not rely on the professional community for supervision or formal guidance

TCF reaches out across society’s barriers to all bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents

- We respect everyone’s beliefs and espouse no specific religious or philosophical ideology
- We welcome parents, siblings, and grandparents of all ages, grieving the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild of any age, and from any cause
- We do not charge individual dues or fees for participation in local chapter meetings
- We do not take sides on political issues or endorse political candidates
- We treat each other with care and respect, showing consideration for those with whom we may disagree

TCF understands that every member has individual needs and rights

- We never suggest that there is a “correct” way for a parent, sibling, or grandparent to grieve
- Everyone joining a local meeting deserves the opportunity to share thoughts and feelings; however, no one is compelled to do so
- All participants at a TCF gathering have the responsibility to listen

TCF reaches out to the bereaved primarily through our community of local chapters

- Local chapters are the bedrock of TCF, and regularly scheduled chapter meetings are the foundation of our service and support
- Chapter meetings are, above all, safe places where thoughts and feelings can be freely expressed, and where all participants can find care and friendship
- Chapters are self-managing, and operate within the principles, policies, and practices of TCF
- We honor those who lead our chapters as integral to TCF’s mission, and work to support them in their outreach

TCF chapters belong to their members

- We treat what is said in chapter meetings as confidential and privileged information
- We reserve the most intimate segment of chapter meetings—the sharing session—for those who are bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents
- We believe that the regularly scheduled chapter meeting should focus on sharing, service, and support; we recommend that issues of chapter administration be addressed outside these meetings

TCF chapters are coordinated nationally to extend help to each other, and to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents everywhere

- TCF’s national operations are guided through its bylaws, policies, and procedures, and overseen by a board whose members are elected by its chapters and regional coordinators
- TCF’s national organization exists, first and foremost, to serve chapters in ways that extend our collective ability to reach those who need our help
- Our national organization also promotes compassionate responses to grief from those outside TCF, manages our relationship with TCF affiliates in other nations, and ensures the integrity of our operations and adherence to our principles
- As members of TCF, we acknowledge our responsibility to support our local and national goals by contributing, as best we can, our time, talent, and resources

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You Think

You think it won’t happen to you, but it does. You think your life could never be this way, but it is. You think you should have recognized that he was dying, but you didn’t. You think your grief is so huge that you’ll forget to breathe, but you don’t. You think the sun will forget to come up, but it doesn’t. You think the tears will stop coming, but they don’t. You think you can’t handle the pain, but you do. You think you’ll lose hope, but you don’t. You think you’ll never be happy again, but you will. You think you’ll be alone forever, but you won’t. You think that you’ll never laugh again, but you do. You think you can’t live without them, but you learn how.

Angelia King TCF Seattle-King County

The Art of Giving

We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the heart; love, kindness, joy, understanding, sympathy, tolerance and forgiveness. We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the mind; ideas, dreams, purposes, ideals, principles, plans, projects or poetry. We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the spirit; prayer, vision, beauty, aspirations, peace and faith. We give our ourselves when we give the gift of words; encouragement, inspiration and guidance. Emerson said it well; “Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts; the only true gift is a portion of thyself.”

Wilfred A Peterson from The Art of Living

No Vacation

There is no vacation from your absence. Every morning I awake I am a bereaved parent; every noon I feel the hole in my heart. Every evening my arms are empty. My life is busy now, but not quite full. My heart is mended, but not quite healed; for the rest of my life every moment will be lived without you. There is no vacation from your absence.

Kathy Boyette TCF, Mississippi Gulf Coast

If Only They Knew

If only they knew that when I speak of him, I am not being morbid, I am not denying his death, I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For twenty-six years he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded and loved; this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief. If only they knew that when I sit quietly, apparently content with my own company, I am not self indulgently unhappy, dwelling on things which cannot be changed; I am with him, I am seeing his face, hearing his voice, remembering his laughter, recalling his excitement and joy in life. Please allow me this time with him as I do not begrudge you your time with your children. If only they knew that when I sometimes weep quietly, I do not cry in self pity for what I have lost. I weep for what he has lost, for the life he loved, for the music which filled his very being, and for all he still longed to hear. For the poetry which moved him to tears, for the beauty about him that daily fed his soul, for the exhilaration and excitement of flying the skies, of searching for his God in the vast space of universe. For all that he loved and lost, I cry. If only they knew the feeling of deep grief, the emptiness, the dull pain, the endlessness of death, if only they understood the insanity of the platitudes so freely spoken that "time heals, that you'll get over it, that it was for the best, that God takes only the best," and realize that these are more an insult than a comfort, that the warm and compassionate touch of another means so much more. If only they knew that we will not find true peace and tranquility until we are prepared to try to stand in the shoes of others. We will not be understood until we learn to understand compassionately and we will not be heard until we learn to listen with hearts as well as minds.

Jan McNess TCF, Victoria, Australia

Shared Thoughts on Grieving Fathers

When a child dies, it is very acceptable for a mother to fall apart, depend on any and everyone around her, and openly grieve. But, our forefathers have taught us that males are to be stoic, control their emotions, and be strong for the entire family. Today's males have contributed greatly to changing this image, but it still needs much improvement for men to comfortably acknowledge their pain, not grieve in isolation, be temporarily dependent while grieving, and let the world know why they hurt. The social conditioning of males has created a major obstacle. Repressing feelings and expressions causes grief to move inward, preventing dealing with their grief. There is only one way to overcome this, to the point of it being tolerable of our grief and that is to experience it. Sometimes self-focus is necessary for our healing. We all need emotional support when in the turmoil of grief, and the need has nothing to do with the gender. A male's need to be self

sufficient can send out false messages and isolate him from family and friends, who want to help. It is important for wives to feel needed by their husbands. It is very difficult to grieve together, but it is necessary to acknowledge the other's pain. When family and friends ask how other family members are doing, and fail to inquire about the father's condition, they minimize his pain by inferring he is not a primary griever. A father is as much a primary griever as his wife. We bury our children, but we do not bury love or grief. We do not need to make excuses for tears that are shed because of the tremendous loss of someone we love dearly. The grief we hide prolongs our healing. We all tend to keep more inside as time passes. This is because; we know most people do not understand the longevity of grief. Perhaps, we have helped to create this image by not being honest when we are asked how we are. After much time has passed, we usually won't admit to those who have not lost a child that we are still so fragile, that the tidal wave of pain can come out of nowhere. One small incident can make our grief feel fresh, and cause a raging storm within. If we had a choice, most of us would have traded places with our deceased child. We did not have this choice, but at some point, and certainly not in our early grief, we do have a choice to make a tolerable life for ourselves. It is not easy to forgive ourselves for our human faults, both real and imaginary, that we make while rearing our children. But forgiveness certainly helps to bring victory over our despair by easing our pain, and very necessary if we are to embrace our future once again. Facing the future can bring much pain to us in our early grief, for we can barely face the day, hour or moment. Down the road, after some healing, we have to make a commitment to building a life for ourselves. It can never be the same, and that special something is always missing. But, we need to eventually get past that gut wrenching, all consuming pain and make a life we can live with. We must begin with small goals that are possible to achieve. It takes a longtime to understand our children's life was greater than their death. Their living changed our lives, and left us with a lot of unfinished love. The love is immortal, and can be more alive if we get control of our own life once again, and dedicate our very living to their life and not their death.

Marie Hofmockel TCF, Valley Forge

Thank You Dear Friend

In a shaky voice I told you how much I had lost; and what I'd do to get it back no matter what it cost. You listened patiently to me as I spoke of my fear; and I know it broke your heart to see my falling tears. We speak of what once was and what could be; about yesterday and tomorrow and the changes in me. I am a prisoner of uncertainty, my world upside down. The life I knew as my normal can no longer be found. But you took my trembling hands gently in your own; and you lovingly reassured me that I am not alone. The days ahead will be difficult, many times I will fall; but I know you will pick me up and help me through it all.

Charles Jackson

Our losses change us and change the course of our lives. It's not that one can never again be happy following an experience of loss; the reality is simply that one can never again be the same.

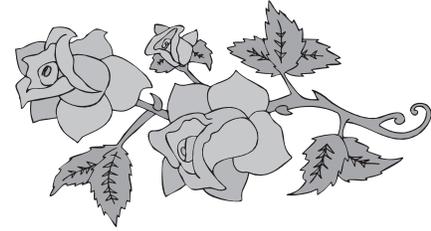
Ann Kaiser Sterns

Myths About Grief

We talk about grief in misleading ways in this society, using terms such as “letting go, bringing closure, or resolving grief.” The problem with these words is that they are inaccurate and set up faulty beliefs. Talking as if letting go or resolving grief is the goal and sets up expectations that we may see both unattainable and unacceptable to someone who has lost someone they love. We desperately don’t want to let go of a loved one, especially when that person is our child. You may find that, all too often, well-meaning people around you, out of their own feelings of helplessness, will offer up these ideas, as if they will help get you past the horrible pain or see the loss as more manageable. However, the platitudes that are offered rarely elicit more than frustration, anger, or feelings of deeper isolation. People who have lost a son or a daughter know that “letting go” is not the goal and that it would be foolish to even try. It is not a matter of “getting over” the death. That won’t ever happen, nor should it. While it is necessary to let go of some of the attachment to the world as you knew it, you won’t ever let go of the relationship. The goal is to figure out how to hold on in new ways. When your child is no longer in your external world, you have to figure out how to hold on to them in your internal world in new ways, and how to honor the legacy they leave. Additionally, moving through your grief is not a matter of getting over the pain, but rather, finding a place for the pain, so that it is not on the front burner, dominating every waking and many sleeping moment. That searing, heavy pain that renders hope inaccessible, and joy a thing of the past, will soften some. For a long time, though, moving away from the sadness not only seems impossible, it often doesn’t even really seem desirable. This is the fundamental tension in the grief process, wanting to feel better because the grief can feel so unbearable, and at the same time not wanting to because it seems that doing so would somehow be leaving your child behind. As a grieving mother once so eloquently told me, “I can’t and I won’t accept the unacceptable.” It can’t help but seem at times that feeling okay would somehow be equated with saying its okay that your child isn’t living; it isn’t. It is about coming to know, on very deep levels, where you have choices and where you don’t. With time, support, and a lot of effort to rework your understanding of your world, what does happen is that alongside the pain of the loss, life can develop in ways that once again hold joy. One of the most important things for getting by is to find people who can support you in the ways you need to be supported, be it friends, family or professionals. Find people who can stay with you emotionally, tolerating the feelings of sadness, helplessness, guilt, and anger without setting a lot of rules on what you should feel, or assigning a time frame to your grief. Someone who, more than anything, helps you trust yourself, helps you believe that you know best what you need, whether it’s time with others, time alone, time to look back, time to sit with the pain, however awful it is, because there is no other honest choice; or time to take a break from the pain and laugh, be busy and be distracted. Someone who says, “Listen to yourself, I will be here with you.” You don’t need someone to give you instructions or the answers that no one else holds. You may need to tell people explicitly what you need, but you will learn quickly who can hear you and respond and who can’t. Life hands us all kinds of loss and all kinds of suffering, no one knows this more than someone

who has lost a child. No one can fix that; no one can make it not painful. What can be fixed, however, having to be alone with the suffering. You need someone to say, “I’m here to listen as your figure this out, and I’m here to walk with you.”

Carol Wogrin, PsyD, RN



Survivors of Suicide

Parents and siblings of a young person who has completed suicide face an almost overwhelming burden of emotions. It is one of the cruelest tragedies that can happen to a family. To pull oneself out of the emotional wreckage is a mighty struggle. Each parent can be utterly devastated and unable to be supportive to their mate or to surviving children. Other family members are shocked and unable to cope with the event. They do not know how to console or help us. Our friends wonder, “How could such a thing happen?” They too, do not know how to help us. We struggle with the “Whys” the unanswered questions and painful memories. We, who count ourselves as survivors, who have made it a year, two years, and some of us are in the third year more, would like to share a few thoughts, First you are not alone. We understand whatever you may be feeling for we have been there! Suicide can intensify the feelings of shock, denial, guilt, anger and depression, all a part of the grief process. The course of recovery is up and down. Give yourself plenty of time. You need a great deal of support, at least through the first year. The suicide of one’s child raises painful questions, doubts and fears. We can find ourselves in a spiritual crisis. We question our beliefs and may feel cut off from God. Through sharing with others who have walked the same path, you may gain some understanding of your reactions and learn some ways to cope. But most of all, we who are in the process of rebuilding our lives, have not forgotten the dark hours of those early days and weeks when we thought we could not live again. We cannot offer you any shortcut through the pain; there isn’t any. But you can help yourself along the way to healing. We can offer you support, encouragement and the hand of friendship.

JoAnn Dodson TCF, Louisville, KY

The butterfly has long symbolized a renewal of life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon signifies death; and the butterfly signifies the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and more free existence. Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the word “Nika,” which means victory. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children’s dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since children are intuitive, she concludes that these children knew their fate and were leaving a message. The Compassionate Friends adopted the butterfly as a symbol of hope that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom, which is a comforting thought to many of us.

Bonnie Rodgers-Ingram TCF, Nashville, TN

OUR CHILDREN LOVED AND REMEMBERED

JULY / AUGUST

In the month of their birth; in the month of their death; and always with love.

David & Joanne Altizer
July 4 – Nov. 26
Richard & Cheryl Arnold
Aug. 12 – June 1
Danielle Jean Atkins
Aug. 25 – Sept. 30
Adlean & Esau Banks
Aug. 16 – Feb. 25
Matthew & Johanna Barbre
July 9 – June 12
Gary & Betty Bivens
May 23 – Aug. 3
Crystal M. Brent
July 6 – Aug. 17
Cheryl Brown
July 29 – Sept. 20
Joe & Rosemary Burns
July 16 – Sept. 18
Mike & Jan Bynum
Dec. 2 – Aug. 29
Charlotte Byrd
June 23 – July 10
Penny Callonas
May 22 – July 30
Barbara Carmicheal
Sept. 26 – Aug. 9
Stephen & Benita Carney
Sept. 27 – Aug. 2
Kathy Clements
Aug. 28 – Apr. 8
Elaine R. Craven
July 29 – Nov. 5
Glen & Judy Cummins
July 26 – Jan. 31
Barbara Deloach
July 30 – Nov. 9
Kirk & Leigh Dendy
July 12 – July 3
Colleen DePete
May 30 – Aug. 3
Wade & Anita Detamore
Apr. 8 – July 4
Neila Dick
Aug. 25 – Sept. 30
Ron & Kimberly Dunlevy
Oct. 8 – Aug. 18
Mark & Jenice Escue
Apr. 19 – July 7
Danny & Martha Fay
Aug. 20 – July 31
Gary & Ann Floyd
Sept. 10 – Aug. 27
Sheila Forrest
Oct. 3 – July 2
Bob & Sheila Foust
June 7 – Aug. 9
David & Jane Gadd
Aug. 16 – July 8
Karen Gale
July 1 – Mar. 3
Teresa Garrod
July 26 – Apr. 28
Debby Gillespie
July 12 – July 3
Pam Goode
July 22 – Dec. 21
Gail Haley
Aug. 17 – Apr. 13
Cliff & Rose Hannah
July 24 – Feb. 29
Robert Haynie
July 14 – June 19
Terry & Cyndi Henson
July 28 – Oct. 6
Sammy & Cherie Howell
Aug. 15 – Oct. 14
Barbara Isom
Jan. 17 – Aug. 14
Peter & Jody Jarjoura
Aug. 13 – June 22
Diane Vannucci Johnson
Nov. 1 – Aug. 12
Jim & Lane Jones
Apr. 5 – July 10
Bob Kirk
May 12 – Aug. 15
Pat & Barbara Kitchens
Aug. 20 – July 25
Ken & Vicki Knych
Aug. 12 – Dec. 31
Steve & Vicki Lawrence
Aug. 5 – Aug. 4
Yolanda Lazarini
Feb. 22 – Aug. 8
Anne Liddell
Aug. 20 – Apr. 16
Ken & Sharon Ludwig
June 11 – Aug. 19
Denise Martin
Aug. 21 – Jan. 17

Justin D. Mason
Kevin Ryan Arnold
Jason Christopher Atkins
Travis Banks
Emily Ann Barbre
Ashley Nicole Bivens
Stacie Chanelle Walls
Gerald Karene English
James "Chris" Christopher Burns
Jody Michael Bynum
Kevin Thomas Byrd
Devon Trace Callonas
Paul Jason Carmicheal
James Thurmond Carney
Rebecca "Becca" Brianne Spahr
Maureen Elizabeth Craven
Scott Robert Cummins
Shelby "Chi-Chi" Dawson
Hanna Montez Dendy
Joseph Gerard DePete III
Trippe Graham Detamore
Jason Christopher Atkins
Abbey Grace Dunlevy
Rachel LaVae Escue
Zachary Thomas Fay
Julie Kathryn Floyd
Stephen Daly Sullivan
Lonnie "Paul" Cofer, Jr.
Lindsey Elizabeth Gadd
Robyn Bryan
Timothy David Garrod, Jr.
Hanna Montez Dendy
Gary Edwin Rives
Martin Justin Perry
Clifford "Trey" G. Hannah, III
Mary Lowrey Haynie
Brandon Joseph Henson
Cory Todd Howell
Stanton Jerome Isom
Jordan Antoine Jarjoura
Julie Diane Vannucci Barney
Joshua Danial Peeler
Amy Allison Kirk
Brandon Nicholas Kitchens
Carter Lyle Knych
Scarlett Akins
Kevin William Lazarini
Matthew David Johnson
Seth Matthew Rowan
Stephen Christopher Brown

Rick & Cindy Martin
Aug. 22 – Aug. 7
Kathy McBroom
Feb. 14 – Aug. 28
Derek & Barbara McKinnon
Nov. 27 – July 18
Amy McOwen
Sept. 14 – Aug. 10
Amy McOwen
May 22 – Aug. 10
Johnny & Virginia Miller
Mar. 1 – July 10
Sherryl Mintz
July 12 – Feb. 26
Mike & Lori Morris
Aug. 14 – Sept. 7
David & Holly Muriel
Apr. 8 – July 17
Brandon & Angela Myers
June 30 – July 1
Brandon & Angela Myers
June 30 – July 1
Jeff & Margaret Needham
July 18 – July 4
Evelyn M Nelson
July 30 – Jan. 2
Doug & Maria Netterville
July 24 – July 24
Clint & Teresa Norwood
July 11 – Apr. 24
Woody & Sherry Oliphant
Aug. 31 – Sept. 1
Emily Parr
Aug. 28 – April 8
Brian & Renee Pate
July 15 – May 9
Andy & Glenda Pera
Aug. 2 – Aug. 7
Tracy Petersen
Feb. 10 – Mar. 4
Ron & Dorris Porter
May 12 – July 8
Linda Ranev
Aug. 17 – Aug. 30
Dianne Rhea
Aug. 28 – May 11
Leonard & Barbara Richman
May 18 – Aug. 30
Tina Rogers
Nov. 30 – July 8
Larry Schmucker
Nov. 22 – July 12
Milton & Sharon Southall
Apr. 12 – Aug. 5
Brittaney Spahr
Aug. 28 – Apr. 8
Robbie Spearman
Aug. 23 – Aug. 24
Robbie Spearman
Aug. 23 – Nov. 27
Helen Stump
July 3 – July 29
Gina Sugarmon
July 18 – June 25
Al & Kala Swamy
Mar. 2 – July 31
Ruth Ann Terry
Aug. 20 – Nov. 9
Gloria L. Thomas
Nov. 7 – July 24
Allan & Karen Tiburzi
Mar. 22 – July 19
Ruff & Jo Ella Turner
Oct. 8 – July 8
Carlo & Tanja Van Rantwijk
Feb. 20 – July 1
Charlie Mae Walker
July 13 – Mar. 7
Wayne Webb
Sept. 12 – Aug. 9
Fred & Deb Wells
July 4 – May 26
Paul & Lisa Westfield
Apr. 18 – Aug. 13
David & Catherine White
Aug. 6 – July 28
Ana Elizabeth Whitten
Aug. 24 – July 2
Laurie Williams
Aug. 26 – June 19
Tony & Sandra Williams
July 11 – June 26
Michael & Nina Williamson
Feb. 28 – July 7
Fran Young
July 17 – May 2
Janet Yow
July 3rd
Angela Zahn & Robert Walker
Feb. 28 – July 14

April Michelle Pera
Autumn Elizabeth McBroom
Jesse Tyler McKinnon
Brandy Nicole Brown
Arthur Dillin Mackey IV
Christopher Allen Beshires
Adrain Ira Mintz
Courtney Leanne Morris
Ashley Danielle Muriel
Calen Seth Myers
Caden Nathaniel Myers
Kathryn Elaine Needham
Leslie "Skip" Rhodes Nelson, III
Lauren Elizabeth Netterville
Spenser Lamar Norwood
Trey Oliphant
Rebecca "Becca" Brianne Spahr
Andrew Wade Pate
April Michelle Pera
Kristopher Ray Rogers
Eric Gentry Porter
Dustin "Dusty" Ranev Arnwine
Jason David Rhea
Stephanie Leigh Richman
Phaedra Brown
Michael Alan Schmucker
Audrey Elizabeth Southall
Rebecca "Becca" Brianne Spahr
Hunter Spearman
Storm Spearman
Michael Wayne Stump, Jr.
Tine Spence
Jay Swamy
Randy Lashley
Michael L. Dorian
Michael Allan Tiburzi
John Asbury Turner
Ruud Justin Van Rantwijk
Jamal Duan Walker
Michael J. Webb
Andrew Pierce Wells
Christopher Paul Westfield
William David White II
Victoria Elizabeth Melo Whitten
Christopher Colby Williams
Samantha Williams
Jermaine M. Holland
Julie Anne Young
Baby Yow
Roshon Demetrius Walker

LOVE GIFTS

Love Gifts are tax-deductible donations to the Chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling or in honor of a loved one or friend. Our Chapter depends on these donations to help us reach out to others by sending the newsletter, purchasing books, brochures, and tapes/videos for our library, educating others about what we do and maintaining our relationship with the TCF National Chapter. Thank you for your support.

<p>Steve, Jennifer & Wesley Brown In memory of their son and brother Aubrey William Brown</p>	<p>❁ ❁ ❁ ❁</p> <p>Debby Gillespie In memory of her niece on her 14th birthday, July 12th Hanna Montez Dendy</p> <p>❁ ❁ ❁ ❁</p>	<p>Jeff and Margaret Needham In memory of their daughter on her 26th birthday, July 18th Katherine Elaine Needham</p>
<p>Allan & Karen Tiburzi & Family In memory of their son and brother Michael Allan Tiburzi 3-22-68 – 7-19-89</p>		<p>Gina Sugarmon In memory of her daughter on her birthday, July 18th Tina Spence</p>

In Memory of Michael Allan Tiburzi

It will be 20 Years! I always mark each anniversary or birthday of what would have been a milestone with a poem or some sort of acknowledgment. Twenty years is fast approaching, and I have concluded I can barely accept this fact yet alone mark it in anyway. So my only words are that I love you Michael more each day, and I am so sorry you didn't finish living your wonderful life. Dad, Wendy, Michael, Caroline and I need you so much and that will never go away. It is fast approaching, an anniversary of 20 years. Please make it go away, that terrible day of tears. I remember The Beginning. All I wanted was for it to be a lie. So I put my head under the covers, and kept asking, why oh why? It turns out nothing changes when the heart is sad and broken; except it's time to keep this milestone to ourselves, quiet and unspoken.

Mom

Last night while I was trying to sleep, my son's voice I did hear. I opened my eyes and looked around, but he did not appear. He said, "Mom, you've got to listen, you gotta understand; He didn't take me from you Mom, He only took my hand. When I called out in pain that night, the instant that I died, He reached down and took my hand, and pulled me by His side. He pulled me up and saved me from the misery and pain. My body hurt so badly inside I could never be the same. My search is really over now, I've found happiness within. All the answers to my empty dreams and all that might have been. I love you all and miss you so, and I'll always be nearby. My body's gone forever, but my spirit will never die! And so you must go on now. Don't be mad, just understand, He didn't take me from you Mom, He only took my hand."

Barb Johnson

A Voice from a Little Grave

Weep not for me, sweet mother; if aught can mar my perfect happiness, it is to see thy tears. I am not sleeping beneath the little green hillock, which in thy love thou hast planted with bright flowers and watered with thy tears. In this quiet and lovely spot, thou hast lain my cast-off garment, but that which animated it and endeared it to thy heart is on angels' wings, hovering ever around thee. I am one of the glorious "clouds of witnesses that encompass thee;" when busied with thy toils, I watch beside thee, and see thee ever brushing away the sorrowing tear. When kneeling before thy Maker, I am with thee; when alone and sad thou sittest and weepiest upon thee, I am guarding with my now unsleeping eyes thy beloved form. Seest thou me not, sweet mother; lift up, not thy bodily eye, but thine eye of faith; then wilt thou look upon me. Listen with the ear of faith, and thou shalt hear my tiny harp and the "new song" I am singing to "him who sitteth upon the throne." Oh, you would not wish to recall me to your earthly home, could you form even a faint conception of my present bliss, or the glories of my new home. Let my name be dear and familiar in your home, and often speak of me to my little playmates, with smiles and a cheerful heart. Let them not think of me as lost, or dead, but living forever in a bright and beautiful land where nothing can disappoint us, or make us weary or sad, where there are no tears, no sickness, nor death; where the blessed Savior folds his little lambs in his arms and loves them.

Sarah Roberts Light of Little Graves, Published in 1848

*There is love in our pain,
memories in our grief, hope in our sharing.*

<p>You may send your Tax-deductible Donation to:</p>	<p>The Compassionate Friends P. O. Box 38653 Germantown, TN 38183-0653</p>
<p>Child's Name _____</p>	
<p>Parent's/Grandparent's/Friend(s) Name _____</p>	
<p>Love Gift (Any Donation Amount) _____</p>	
<p>In Memory Of _____</p>	
<p>On The Occasion Of _____</p>	

After the First Year

After the first year the pain changes from a crushing weight to a wickedly cutting edge. Time speeds up from a grinding plodding to a more normal routine. And sometimes you forget, for a moment, that your whole life was destroyed just last year. After the first year you start to remember the good times. You can tell a funny story about your child and save the crying for later. But sometimes it seems like you're the only one left who mourns. "What's the matter with you anyway? It's been a whole year." After the first year your child seems a little closer and yet still so far away. Miracle of miracles, you haven't forgotten how he walks, his voice, the shape of his head, or the solid warmth of his fingers curving around yours. Those memories ambush you at many unlikely moments and tear you apart. After the first year, your heart begins to thaw. You remember that you once loved your surviving children and you love them once again. You remember that life used to hold joy; and you rediscover some small enjoyment in living. You learn to piece your life back together in a different pattern. After the first year you pick up your burdens and go on. Amazingly you have survived a blow more painful than anything you ever imagined. Even though you wish you had died too, it slowly dawns on you that you must still live because after the first year, comes the second year.

Liz Ford TCF Madison, WI

Musings

Isn't it strange that things we once took for granted, have changed so much? Things like the soft wings of a brilliant colored butterfly, or the radiant colors in the sky at dawn and sunset or perhaps a song we heard in passing or a movie, we once took for granted. But now, these very same things can bring on tears and leave us feeling a deep sense of longing. Why? Are these not the same as before? What changed? We

did. The things we once took for granted are now viewed with much more than human eyes. We now experience these things through the eyes of a broken heart. I believe grief gives us a very different view on things. A heart bruised and broken by loss has a new tenderness and compassion. Just look inside yourself at how your views have changed. I also believe this is our children speaking to us saying, look at the beauty and know that I am still near.

Sheila Simmons, TCF Atlanta, GA

23 Months After

I drove up the road to the curve where you died. I searched for you there, I screamed and I cried. I hoped to unburden my heavy load, as I looked for your soul by the side of the road. I tried to be brave, so I went to your grave. I shouted your name then waited to hear; but you never answered in words that were clear. I thought it was you when the crow made his sound; as I looked for your soul under the ground. I stepped to your room, where you kept all your things. I looked for you there in the memory that it brings. I read through letters and words that you said; as I looked for your soul in your empty bed. I picked up a book and read all that I could, all about God, just to see where you stood. I looked to the sky, and I cried to you loud; as I looked for your soul in each passing cloud. I turned on your music and sang your old songs; the lyrics might tell me where you had gone. I thought I heard messages, however unclear; as I looked for your soul in the notes I could hear. I went to the mountains, then to the beach; I went to a psychic in hopes he could reach. I checked with my doctor, my lawyer, a guru; but none of their wisdom could lead me to you. I could not find where I thought you should be; but something told me you lived inside of me. I finally looked where you were from the start; I found your soul deep inside my heart.

Jacqueline Brown TCF, Bucksport, PA

The Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 38653
Germantown, TN 38183-0653

July/August 2009



**Our Next Meetings:
July 2nd & August 6th**

*Printing of our newsletter is provided by Paulsen
Printing Company, Jim and Judy Paulsen, Owners;
In Loving Memory of their son Randy.*